

# Emergency Responder

WASHINGTON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION



WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT

January-February 2003

## Counties seek wireless 911 number display

Washington's 39 counties requested in January that wireless phone carriers begin to provide the wireless phone's call back number to the state's 73 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs).

Under Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rule, wireless carriers must comply with the counties' request within six months.

AT&T Wireless, Cricket Communications, Cingular Wireless, Inland Cellular, Nextel, Qwest Wireless, Rural Cell, Sprint PCS, T-Mobile USA, US Cellular and Verizon Wireless have received the county requests to provide the wireless phone call back number display in PSAPs.

When this Phase I of wireless caller identification is implemented, a wireless 911 call at the PSAP will automatically display the wireless phone's call back number on the call taker's computer monitor. This is important should the wireless phone call be interrupted or the caller is unable to speak.

"With one third of all calls to 911 now being made on wireless phones, and with the projection that by 2005 the majority of all 911 calls will be placed on cell phones, the 911 industry must assure personal safety of all wireless phone users," said Bob Oenning, Washington State E911 Administrator.

"Personal safety sells wireless phones, and wireless phones do not now provide critical information to the 911 call center to assure timely response for the caller," Oenning affirmed. "We hope to improve response delivery now that all the counties have approached the wireless carriers to provide automatic call back phone numbers.

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A state Department of Transportation crew works to repair a slide that damaged U.S. 12 east of White Pass after late January rains triggered floods and landslides across the state. (WDOT photo)

## State EOC activates for Hanford, floods and terror alert

February brought the Washington Emergency Management Division one of its single busiest weeks with three activations of the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The emergency work started with a Pineapple Express weather event during Jan. 30 and 31 that triggered heavy, warm downpours throughout the state – even in the areas of mountain snowpack. The result was flooding that ranged from the Olympic Peninsula to the Blue Mountains of southeast Washington.

Brent Bower of the National Weather Service said the heaviest precipitation fell in southern Washington. Rainfall amounts totaled three to four inches in the foothills with five to six inches in the mountains.

Flooding occurred on 10 Washington rivers, with three others that came very close, he said. Most of the river flooding developed in the South Sound and south to central Cascade foothills.

While there was minor flooding on most rivers, he said major flooding occurred on the Cowlitz River above Mayfield Dam. Significant flood crests were recorded also on the Tolt, Puyallup, Nisqually, Newaukum, Skookumchuck, Carbon and Cedar rivers, Bower said.

More than 40 homes were evacuated in the Randle and Packwood areas of eastern Lewis County where the Cowlitz River reached four feet over flood stage. Further downstream, the flooding Cowlitz forced residents to leave low lying areas near Castle Rock and Kelso in Cowlitz County.

Flooding along the Lewis River required sandbagging efforts at Woodland

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## State EOC activated for Hanford, flooding, and terrorism alerts in February



A homeowner checks rising flood waters in her driveway as the Cowlitz River crested north of Kelso on Feb. 1. (The Daily News photo)

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to save several homes in residential areas that had suffered damage or loss during the severe flooding of early 1996.

In Clark County, the heavy rain and runoff forced several residential evacuations along small creeks as well as a site east of Camas where a landslide threatened as many as 10 homes.

A frantic sandbagging effort during the early morning hours of Feb. 2 involving 150 volunteers and a work crew from the Walla Walla Penitentiary saved a group of homes that were threatened by a fast-rising creek in the College Place area.

In anticipation of flooding problems across the state, the state Emergency Operations Center activated at 8 a.m. Friday, Jan. 31, largely with EMD staff. Because local jurisdictions reported that flooding problems were quickly handled, the EOC returned to normal operations at 11 a.m. Feb. 1.

Initial surveys showed that flood damages were not widespread. Areas of damage included some groups of residences in Lewis and Cowlitz counties and a section of U.S. 12 on

the east side of White Pass. Both lanes of the highway were reopened to traffic on Feb 14.

### Hanford

Instrument readings that showed a release of radiation to the air initiated a mandatory Phase 3 alert at the State Emergency Operations Center at 3:45 p.m. on Feb. 5. It was the first Hanford-related activation since a 1998 incident involving potentially explosive picric acid found beneath a building housing radioactive materials in the Hanford Site's 300 Area

As precautionary steps, the U.S. Department of Energy-Richland in cooperation with Benton and Franklin counties evacuated the Columbia River adjoining the vast Hanford Site and ordered site workers to take cover in the 100 area near the Vernita Bridge, about 30 miles northwest of Richland.

The EOC activation ended after five hours when soil and air samples indicated the instrument readings were faulty.

### Homeland Security

Triggered by an increase in the domestic homeland security warning

levels from Yellow to Orange, the state Emergency Operations Center began a Phase II activation at 9:38 a.m. Friday, Feb. 7.

The activation augmented EMD's continuous alert and warning mission with additional duty officer and supervisory staff. Standby teams also were set up for possible weekend staffing.

The Phase II augmentation for the alert and warning mission was a major element of the record 77-day EOC activation following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Following the Feb. 7 activation, public and media attention focused on individual preparedness for terrorism events, prompted by Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge's recommendation about the use of duct tape and plastic sheeting to shield persons inside a house from airborne contamination released from a terrorism event.

EMD's response emphasized the need for everyone in Washington to have an emergency preparedness kit, including duct tape and plastic to screen a room inside a house to protect against hazardous air releases. A new Shelter in Place fact sheet was added to the EMD website.

On Feb. 19, the Department of Homeland Security kicked off a "Ready Campaign" to advise families on what they can do to protect themselves against terrorism.

Besides television announcements, the campaign will feature fliers that will be distributed with Yellow Pages phone directories.

Brochures can be obtained at post offices or by calling 1-800-Be-Ready. Information is available as well on a new web site [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

## Counties seek wireless 911 number display

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Even with the implementation of wireless Phase I, 911 call takers will still be unable to automatically locate emergency victims or callers. That is where wireless Phase II comes into play. Wireless Phase II will require wireless phone carriers to provide far more precise location information, within 50 to 100 meters in many cases. The FCC established a four-year rollout schedule for wireless Phase II, beginning Oct. 1, 2001 to be completed by Dec. 31, 2005.

The FCC established a two-phase plan in 1997 to provide automatic number identification (ANI) and automatic location identification (ALI) service on all wireless phones. This service, known as the Enhanced 911 (E911) system, has been in place on all wireline phones in Washington since 1999.

Wireless phones currently only permit 911 dialing with no provision for ANI or ALI. The FCC's ruling, ordering of wireless Phase I service, begins to integrate the wireless telephone to the E911 system.

## EMD Training Class Openings Are Available

Openings are available in four Washington Emergency Management Division training classes scheduled for March and April. These classes are:

- *Pre and Post Evaluation of Buildings Effected by Earthquakes*, Mar. 21, Thurston County.
- *Emergency Planning*, April 8-10, Tri-Cities.
- *Exercise, Design and Evaluation*, Mar. 11-13, Thurston County.
- *Principles of Emergency Management*, April 29-May 1, King County.



A Washington Army National Guard helicopter, which is specially equipped with a thermal-imaging device, searches a park in the Tri-Cities area Feb. 19 for any sign of 5-year-old Sofia Juarez, whose disappearance Feb. 3 led to the state's first Amber Alert. (Tri-CityHerald photo)

## Disappearance of 5-year-old Kennewick girl prompts first statewide Amber Alert on Feb. 4

Washington's first Amber Alert message was authorized Feb. 4 by the Washington State Patrol (WSP) at the request of the city of Kennewick Police. Washington Emergency Management Division (EMD) received the WSP authorization at 8:50 a.m. and transmitted the Amber Alert through the Emergency Alert System at 9:13 a.m.

The object of the alert was Sofia Juarez, a 5-year who had been missing in Kennewick since the evening of Feb. 3. Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM) had asked EMD for a search and rescue mission number at 11:23 p.m. Feb. 3, but by early morning, the search became an investigation of a suspected child abduction.

The EAS Amber message was recorded by Brian Calvert, acting BCEM director, and sent by E-Mail to the state emergency operations center at Camp Murray. State duty officers and telecommunications supervisor Don Miller transferred the message to a CD disk and then prepared the statewide EAS message to notify the public.

The alert then was sent to 250 broadcast media outlets and to state receivers. Nearly all of the transmissions and relays occurred without problem. Media coverage of the alert was extensive throughout the state. Several television broadcasts used pictures of Juarez with their alert stories. A national website concerning missing and abducted children also quickly posted her picture with the alert notice.

"We were pretty successful, even though it was the first time" the alert was used, said Ken Parrish, emergency operations center manager. He said an after action review will help identify how to streamline the alert preparation inside the duty officer center.

Rob Harper, EMD public information officer, said Benton County EMD and city of Kennewick police prepared well for the deluge of media calls and inquiries. Their preparations included a statewide press release and the assignment of a telephone team to answer media questions.

Although the girl had not been located as of mid-February, Kennewick police reported the alert had produced numerous tips from the public, including some calls from as far away as Seattle and Wenatchee.

## Personnel

**Robert Oenning**, Enhanced 911 Unit manager, received his 10-year state service award Jan. 30. He joined EMD in 1993 after serving as King County telecommunications manager.

**Jill Nordstrom** was named permanent program assistant in the Analysis and Plans Section of the Mitigation, Analysis and Plans Unit in January. She came to EMD last May from the state Department of Revenue.

**Tammi Clark** became an Emergency Management Program Coordinator Feb. 6 in the Hazard Mitigation Section of the Mitigation, Analysis and Plans Unit. She joined EMD in March 2001 as a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program specialist in the Nisqually Earthquake Disaster Field Office.

**John Ufford** joined EMD Feb. 6 as an Emergency Management Program Coordinator in the Hazard Mitigation Section of the Mitigation, Analysis and Plans Unit. He previously worked in the private sector.

**Max Messman**, a 12-year EMD employee, will serve as the new state regional coordinator for the Regional Homeland Security Coordination Districts that are administering Federal Emergency Management Agency homeland security grants. His new appointment starts March 14. Messman had been the Southwest Washington regional coordinator since 2001. These duties will be reallocated to other EMD program units.

## New chemical weapons cleanup agency created

A new provisional U.S. Army agency was created Feb. 18 to oversee the safe storage and elimination of the nation's aging chemical weapons.

The Chemical Materials Agency (Provisional) combined under one director the demilitarization and storage of chemical weapons. Formerly, these functions were operated by the Chemical Demilitarization Program and the Soldier Biological and Chemical Command (SBCCOM), respectively.

Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White appointed Michael Parker, the SBCCOM deputy commander, as the acting director of the new CMA.

White named Claude M. Bolton Jr., currently the assistant secretary of the army for acquisition, logistics and technology, to direct the Army's chemical demilitarization program, which includes the Umatilla Chemical Depot in Oregon.

The new agency "brings all the parties under one roof necessary to carry out the mission of the safe storage and elimination of obsolete and agency chemical weapons in the U.S." said Parker.

## Local EM changes

**Brian Calvert** was named interim manager for Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM) in January after Rick Garza resigned as manager to accept an emergency management process manager position with SAFR Systems, based in Kennewick. Calvert is the county's Radiological Emergency Program planner.

**Jay Weise**, former Adams County undersheriff, will become the county's emergency management director March 1. Weise succeeds Donovan Dorsey, who retired as the county's emergency management coordinator, last September.

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**The Adjutant General**

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